

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

The question that a sum of Rs. 4,60,046 be granted under Demand V—Registration was put and carried.

The grant was made.

DEMAND VI—RAILWAYS.

MR. A. LAKSHMINARAYANA AYYAR: Sir, I beg to move for a grant of Rs. 59,800 under Demand VI—Railways.

MR. VARKALA K. MADHAVAN: Sir, I beg to move "to reduce the total allotment of Rs. 59,800 under Demand VI—by Rs. 10 to discuss railway affairs."

Sir, the existing arrangement between the South Indian Railway and the Travancore Government will shortly terminate. It is not known what the Government policy will be for the future.

PRESIDENT: According to the present arrangement it serves nobody's purpose—either of the Travancore Government or the S. I. R. That point has been very strongly represented by the Travancore Government.

MR. VARKALA K. MADHAVAN: The other day Mr. Jebamony Nadar was pleading for the extension of the railway line from Trivandrum to Nagercoil.

PRESIDENT: Some twenty or forty years ago what was regarded by daring people as common sense has now been proved to be otherwise. With about one-fourth of the cost the railway line from Palamcottah to Trivandrum could have been constructed with practically no additional expense for railway crossing, bridges, ghats etc. But that was not done. On the other hand, a proposal which was put forward was altered in order to take the line through the mountains the cost involved being seven or eight times more. Various explanations have been given for that line of action. The natural condition of Travancore, being what it is, the initiation of a railway line would mean so many level crossings, bridges, culverts, over-bridges and short turns and the cost of acquisition of land for the extension of railways would be prohibitive so far as the State is concerned. The railway line as it now exists is actually of no assistance to the people of the State nor is it so constructed as to serve the nerve centres of traffic and commerce within the State. The opinion of this Government was so clearly made patent to the Government of India and we reserved about Rs. 65 lakhs for further extension of railway lines. But later on that policy had to be changed. I may say that there are even worse railways than the one between Shencottah and Trivandrum and I have travelled by some of them. Although it is very difficult to believe, it is a fact.

MR. VARKALA K. MADHAVAN: Many of the services are now abolished due to the paucity of railway waggons. Even the timings of shuttle trains running between Quilon and Trivandrum are most inconvenient. From Quilon a train starts at 3 p. m.

PRESIDENT: Is the honourable member prepared to lay new rails which are necessary to speed up the train, reconstruct the permanent way and spend about Rs. 2 crores for that purpose?

[Mr. K. Kunju Panicker.]

മാർഗ്ഗമായി തീർപ്പാക്കിയ ഉപയോഗിക്കാതെ നിവർത്തിയില്ല. കൊല്ലം മുതൽ തിരുവനന്തപുരംവരെയുള്ള യാത്രയിലേക്കിലും കച്ചേരി സംബന്ധമായ യാത്രക്കാരുടെ സൗകര്യത്തെ ഉദ്ദേശിച്ച് ട്രയിംഷീറിന് ഒന്നുമാറ്റം വരുത്തുവാനുള്ള ഉപയോഗപ്രദമായിരിക്കും. ഈ രണ്ട് സംഗതികളും ഗവണ്മെന്റിന്റെ പ്രേരണകൊണ്ട് സാധിക്കാമെന്നു വിശ്വസിക്കുകയും, അതു ഗവണ്മെന്റിന്റെ ശ്രദ്ധയിൽ പെടണമെന്നുപേക്ഷിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ട് ഞാൻ ഈ പ്രമേയത്തെ പിൻതാങ്ങുന്നു.

MR. A. LAKSHMINARAYANA AIYAR : Sir, as the Dewan-President has already discussed the question of policy I do not propose to make any statement.

As regards timings, accommodation in trains, and other matters, I may mention that there is a representative of this Government in the South Indian Railway Advisory Committee who is the Financial Secretary. For such things, if a communication is sent to me, I shall take up the question at the meetings whenever they are convened. I have also noted what the honourable member has stated and I shall take up this matter at the next meeting.

PRESIDENT : As it exists at present, this railway is so inconvenient from many points of view that we are perforce dependent upon Cochin for the bulk of our supplies because the broadgauge railway has got certain natural advantages. The result therefore is that today honourable members will find that there is a great deal of congestion in yalloms for the purpose of transporting our food stuffs from Alwaye or Cochin to our own centres of consumption. We have tried to get some of that traffic diverted to Quilon but we have not been very successful. In all new theatres of war, the meter-gauge and the narrow-gauge railways are more in demand than the broad-gauge railways for many reasons. I am putting nothing more than hypothetical points—these are matters highly confidential and involving high policy; supposing you are laying down a rail and preparing for invasion: it is cheaper to invade a country by laying the narrow-gauge or the meter-gauge than the broad-gauge. Therefore, there is greater dearth of the 2' 6" gauge than in the broad-gauge. That is one of the reasons. Another reason is that deviation of route is difficult.

There is a great deal of truth in the point about difficulties in places like Quilon. That will be looked into.

I am speaking not only to this House but through this House to others so that persons who are in charge of affairs might peruse these remarks and might come to some arrangement by which passenger traffic and goods traffic will be distributed between the railway system and this Government and there could be a partnership. From Palamcottah via Nagercoil to Trivandrum by road the less heavy traffic may come, and from Trivandrum to Shencotta by railway what may be called the heavier traffic might be distributed. The State will take up the control of the less heavy traffic, sufficient number of buses and

lorries being spared to us by the Central Government, and the State authorities are vested with the possession and the disposition of these vehicles in order that this partnership might come into force. This is not a new idea. Six years ago, at a conference which took place within a month of my assuming the present office, I pointed out to the S. I. R. that in the long run it will be advantageous to them if a division is made of the road and railway traffic such as is being attempted in other parts of the country and now being attempted in the U. P. If such an arrangement is come to, it will relieve congestion and will enable the speeding up of both passenger and goods service.

MR. M. R. NARAYANA PILLAI: So far as freight rates are concerned, such as the freight on watch springs and other delicate articles and the freight on tiles and other bulky articles, are not the rates very different? Unless the railway takes materials which give them higher freight will they be accepting such a proposal?

PRESIDENT: The railway rates are now being reduced to normality. Honourable members are aware that the cost of bringing coal to this place from Calcutta is greater than the cost of bringing coal from New castle. These are some of the difficulties.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

The question that a sum of Rs. 59,300 be granted under Demand VI—Railways was put and carried. The grant was made.

DEMAND VII—PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT INCLUDING
WATER WORKS AND DRAINAGE.

MR. I. C. CHACKO: Sir, I move for a grant of Rs. 55,03,560 under Demand VII—Public Works Department including Water Works and Drainage.

MR. M. BHASKARAN NAIR: Sir, I move the following motion:

To reduce the allotment of Rs. 5,500 for travelling allowance by Re. 1.

I wish to speak about the neglect shown towards irrigation works and land communications. My object in moving this motion is to bring to the notice of Government that sufficient attention is not being paid to minor irrigation works and land communication. The Government have recognized the increasing difficulties of the food problem. If the minor irrigation works were properly maintained and enlarged the food problem would not have been so difficult as it is now. This fact has been brought to the notice of Government on many previous occasions by honourable members of this House. It is unfortunate that, in spite of repeated representations, adequate attention is not devoted to this matter. Sir, I may speak with special reference to Neyyattinkara. There the irrigation tanks and channels are left under colossal neglect and disrepair. There are about 783 tanks in that taluk of which 160 only have been improved till now. Of the many tanks improved some are practically useless for irrigation purposes and yet half contribution cess is being realised in respect of them. There are three channels in the taluk which are under maintenance